THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE;

OR

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For the Evening Fire-side.

THE PHILANTHROPIST: NO. VII.

With concern and pity we look on the idle pursuits of man; but few attempt to direct those pursuits towards noble and worthy objects. This is the peculiar duty of the Philanthropist. Viewing mankind as the children of one great family, he considers himself bound, as far as his capacity extends, to instruct them in the ways of virtue, and to lead them in the paths of real happiness. To promote this instruction, he must expose to their view the folly of their present pursuits, and from reason and experience teach them wisdom.

What are the pursuits of man? What ought they to be? His general pursuits are wealth and pleasure, for the attainment of ideal happiness: they ought to be morality and religion, as the dispensers of lasting felicity.

We deny not man the possession of the goods of this world, so far as they are requisite to render life comfortable, to enable him to fulfil the important duties he owes his fellow man, or to maintain his relative position in society. Were these only the objects which stimulate to the pursuit of wealth, soon would we find a greater degree of happiness, than at present, pervading the world. Wretchedness would fly afar, misery would forsake its earthly habitation, to reside in the mansions of eternal oblivion; and the opening bud of Christianity would shoot forth with superior lustre. But, alas! we cannot say, it is for those glorious purposes man pursues wealth.

What then are the objects which appear to make wealth desirable? The delusive happiness of retirement, the power and respectability of riches, or the desire of providing an independent sustenance for our offspring. These are the phantoms, in pursuit of which, man makes himself a slave during his short terrestrial pilgrimage.

Retirement, when seen at a distance, appears indeed beautiful. To virtuous old age it is happiness; but to the man who has amassed a fortune merely for the purpose, and who retreats from the world in the vigour of his days, it is indolence, luxury, and slothful ease. Without solid virtue few can enjoy retirement. If a man has been accustomed to an industrious life, this to him is a life of burdensome idleness; if to the acquirement of wealth, this will seldom afford him pleasure; if to a life of philanthropic benevolence, in pursuit of this he flies from the station he was intended to fill in society. Should he even be enabled, by mental amusement, to support his own happiness in retirement, still he neglects many duties, while he disregards the happiness of others. Then seldom indeed, is retirement admissible, seldom does it contribute to real happiness: we may say with propriety, only when, in the decline of years, we leave the vain world to train our children in virtue, or to prepare for an approaching, and awful futurity.

Wealth has made men respectable and powerful. Virtue alone should. This inconsistency is the result of a deficiency in our education. We are taught to pay too much regard to appearance, without seeking for real worth. The gaudy dress, and splendid equipage of the wealthy, attract our attention, and we ask, Are they not worthy of respect? We ought rather to put a more important question: Are they virtuous? Then, soon would wealth lose that alluring influence which makes it respectable and powerful.* We might again ask, Are they happy? and the general voice of mankind replies, few of them indeed are! for wealth not only draws man from his religious duties, but is often the source of burdensome cares to its possessor. No longer then, oh man! pursue wealth, as the means of acquiring respectability, power, or happiness: let virtue alone for these objects claim thy regard.

Why does man anxiously provide for the independence of his offspring? That they may be happy when he is laid in the silent grave! Wealth without virtue, will not contribute to happiness! That they may be respectable! Wealth may make them apparently; virtue alone can make them really respectable. We may, with more propriety say, that they may come to a miserable end, after squandering in luxury, indolence and dissipation, the fortunes on them bestowed! The wealthy parent seldom views in a true light, the future happiness of a child; seldom teaches it the proper use of riches; or, by instilling into its tender bosom the pure principles of morality, and religion, how to bear the frowns of adversity. The child soon learns its prospects, and arrives at the age of reflection without the least desire of curbing the unruly passions of his nature. Thus, how incapable is man rendered of performing his duties to society, and how little qualified to discharge his more important duties to his Creator. Yet this is too often the education of children of wealthy parents. How vain then our search after wealth, as a medium of happiness or respectability to our offspring.

Thus the Philanthropist must condemn the pursuit of wealth, when those are the objects of that pursuit. And man will do well always to examine, for what purpose he is desirous of riches, in order that he may not sacrifice at the shrine of vanity, ambition or conceit, every hope of a happy immortality. We will conclude with laying it down as a rule, that a life of industry, contentment and virtue, destitute of all immoderate desires, is that which will contribute to true earthly happiness, most effectually promote the intent of our being, and direct us with greatest certainty towards the mansions of eternal felicity.

> "Man wants but little here below,
> "Nor wants that little long."

J.

* The Philanthropist does not pretend to say that all wealthy men are destitute of virtue.

For the Evening Fire-side.

ADDRESS TO THE WINTER MOON.

Written in the Country.

Sweet Moon! with visage pale and wan,
Just beaming through yon western cloud;
While from his chamber rushing on,
The wintry storm beats shrill and loud.

Where are thy wonted followers?—tell,
The Whip-poor-will with cheerful throat?
The piping frog, in plashy dell,
And the shard beetle's droning note?

Whence comes it, that from bush or brake,
Shrill caty-dids no longer cry?
What art has lull'd the speckled snake,
What charm forbid the bat to fly?

Sweet Moon! thy silver beaming bow,
Shines on the tardy brook in vain;
Its sluggish streams forget to flow,
Entangled by an icy chain.

Dear to the world, yet far most dear
To the lone wanderer on the plain;
Dull mists and murky shadows drear,
Obscure thy pensive silent reign.

Alas! to earth's prolific bed
No more thy gladsome beams invite;
But sheltering to the fodder'd shed,
To shun the bitter blasts of night,

The sheep, the steed, the heifer crowd,
Nor tempt the iron-sounding plain;
While to the hovel, bold and loud,
The warrior cock conducts his train.

Sweet Moon! the god of Nature grants
These seeming stern ungenial hours,
Provider sure for future wants,
Strength'ners of earth's exhausted powers.

Tho' clad in universal snow;
Before thy waning horns appear;
Reviving sap again shall flow,
Sweet presage of the teeming year.

C.

2d Month, 1805.

For the Evening Fire-side.

DREAMS.

"*Ecce Somniator venit!*"

There is nothing perhaps more familiar to the mass of mankind, than the subject on which I here propose to speculate a little; and yet, as far as my observation extends, no subject appears to be so little understood generally, nor viewed in so unphilosophical a light. Many people of the best sense, and otherwise of correct judgment, attach something of mystery and supernatural influence to those visionary phantoms of the brain. I have often been surprised at observing persons of the above description, relate their dreams with great gravity, and watch for the occurrence of some analogous circumstances, in order that their "*dream might be out*," as they term it. A recital of the odd vagaries of the imagination during sleep, is frequently amusing; but when they are seriously told, as being foreboders of impending events, I find "to be grave exceeds all power of face." No part of metaphysics is better established, than that which teaches, that the mind is altogether acquired through the medium of the senses. This truth was long since known; as we may learn by the old maxim, *Nihil est intellectu quod non prius fuit in sensu.*" Hence, as the senses are quiescent in the sleeping state, no new ideas (that is, simple ideas) can be acquired by the mind, while that state continues. Nothing truly original, can be presented to the mind, while the senses are dormant. All the complicated novelties which are then fabricated by the imagination, may be readily resolved into simple materials, which previously existed in the mind. The test of reason quickly demolishes the grotesque structure of dreams, and like the spear of Ithuriel, causes the component parts to resume their pristine appearance. It may be said that there are instances in which dreams have given a correct premonition of events for some time prior to their occurrence. But casual incidents are not to be cited as criteria—and besides, if every circumstance attending those instances had been properly attended to, it is more than probable the facts might have been rationally explained. From an irregular circulation, or partial excitement in the brain during sleep, many singular and often ludicrous associations of ideas take place, but they are ideas which had been previously excited, although not so oddly combined. Those strange combinations can only take place while the judgment lies dormant.—MILTON had a correct opinion of the nature of dreams, which he has adorned with the elegant vesture of poetry. It is expressed where Adam endeavours to comfort his consort on account of her troublesome vision. He says

——"But know that in the soul
"Are many lesser faculties, that serve
"Reason as chief; among these fancy next
"Her office holds; of all external things,
"Which the five watchful senses represent,
"She forms imaginations; aery shapes,
"Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
"All what we' affirm or what deny, and call
"Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
"Into her privy cell when nature rests.
"Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
"To imitate her; *but misjoining shapes,*
"*Wild works produces oft, and most in dreams,*
"*Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.*"

The true theory of dreams is in fact contained in the foregoing quotation; and although the doctrine might be extended to a great length, I shall not here presume to dilate farther on the subject.

A DREAMER.

February 21*st*, 1806.

FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

Verses, on the late THOMAS CORBYN, *one of the people called Quakers.*

The marble tomb, the proudly sculptur'd bust,
The vain may prize, to make their mem'ry live;
But can these keepers frail retain their trust?
Time mingles all, unconscious of reprieve.

In vain th' impassion'd verse shall tell their fate,
All varnish'd o'er, to cheat admiring eyes;
But scann'd by truth, their gaudiest colours fail,
And but to fade their greenest laurels rise.

Not so who look beyond this earthly sphere;
Their paths more brighten'd by the heavenly light,
Who seek no recompense from honors here,
Nor by dissentions human praise invite.

What tho' their truth held on its humble way,
Along the peaceful calm serene of life,
Their virtues never blaz'd upon the day,
In ostentation with the sons of strife.

Tho' unadorn'd their truth in simple plight,
Nor like a harlot us'd a false disguise,
Redd'ning a wrathful meteor on the sight,
Nor borrow'd trappings from the wordly wise.

Still should their loss impel a generous tear,
If ever Gratitude its debt confess'd,
Or ever virtue earn'd a tribute dear,
Or ever justice warm'd the human breast.

CORBYN, departed from this world of woe,
Might well demand the panegyric lay;
Might well compel the feeling source to flow,
Or plead example for the warmest praise.

Not so he wish'd—but as some modest flower,
Breathes its sweet fragrance on some lonely soil,
He sav'd the wretched from affliction's power,
And eas'd the yoke of misery and toil.

As Enoch walking, it sufficed to know,
They felt the good, for whom it was design'd;
In blessing blest, the high extatic glow,
Leaves lesser praises, for each lesser mind.

Those feel that peace the world cannot give,
And give as freely as to them is given;
They hear that voice the world will not receive,
The songs of triumph, and the harps of heaven.

Pure source of love, and principle of truth,
In every bosom still thyself reveal;
Still bear thy witness in our rising youth,
Still let the aged all thy influence feel.

This vital spirit shall declare its source,
From everlasting yields to no deline;
This, like the eagle, shall renew its force,
Its end *perfection*, and its *aim* divine.

For the Evening Fire-side.

——The wild bliss of Nature needs alloy,
And Fear and Sorrow fan the fire of Joy.

It is hardly possible to imagine to how great extent the operations of Nature might incline, and into what excesses they would run, if one thing were not placed by her to check and restrain another. Bold and unlimited in her plans: whatever she has formed bears the impression of omnipotence: and to that immense structure, whose numerous relations confound the reflection of the most capacious, or the conceptions of the most daring. She has given that ease and freedom, which enable them to move on, and attain without the smallest restraint or perplexity, the end of their formation.

"She launch'd the Globe to float aloft in air."

The laws of Nature are too abstruse for the ken of mortal research: But we know many of Nature's Arcana. The motion of our Earth by the attraction of the Sun is moulded into a revolution. The Moon is operated upon in the same manner by the Earth, and the Earth in return is affected in many ways by her Sattellite.

Thus, throughout the Universe, causes are operated upon by their corresponding causes, and reciprocal effects produced by each. And we perceive they are not only connected in a positive respect, but have the double relation to aid and to restrain. Were this mutual dependance annihilated, confusion would succeed order, and separate objects be pursued without any reference to the good of the whole.

To make this application to ourselves; to humanize it, if we may so speak, and consider in the same way the different guards set upon the human passions by their tendency to each other all appears beautiful and lovely. Man goes on, consulting the benefit of his fellow man, and though endued with selfish inclinations, he also possesses generosity and benevolence. Avarice or ambition never induce him to sacrifice his neighbour's interest at the shrine of his own. Thus, no whirlwinds demolish, no gusts overturn the fair fabric of mutual good.

"All calm and lovely rolls the smiling wave."

But turning from this ideal picture to view the reality, we discover that the restrictions which nature has thus set on most of her performances, apply far less forcibly to the propensities of man. Avarice is opposed by generosity, selfishness by benevolence, vice by fear, and virtue is incited by the anticipation of rewards. But yet we frequently see that when one passion possesses the soul, all others are neglected to give the favourite its sway. A vice will be pursued with all the ardency of devotion, and public applause; domestic felicity, and self complacence, are thought on only to be turned from with scorn. Virtues are also sometimes pursued to the excess of folly, and become pernicious in proportion as they run into their collateral vices. Who has not deplored that religion which has now degenerated into enthusiasm and bigotry—the generosity which scatters its bounties with blind and useless profusion, and the warm heart of friendship—formed for delight in interchange of affection, prostituted to lawless love, and wildness of desire?

Were we suffered to follow one continued track; if uninterrupted success or successive misfortunes were constantly to attend us, we should undoubtedly miss that happiness which all men appear to pursue. In the first place our passions, unbridled by opposition, would ever be creating new wishes; would rack the powers of Fancy to imagine new delights, and must ultimately sicken at the impossibility of attainment. Each pleasure palls when familiarized by enjoyment; and as man, uncurbed in his views, goes on in unrestrained licentiousness, he must soon reach the confines of Gratification, and then misery succeeds. On the other hand, misfortune long continued, will blunt the feelings of the finest heart, and stifle the most acute sensibility. Every finer quality is blasted by its baleful influence. The open countenance, the "mein erect" are succeeded by stupor and servility. The boldness of Genius sickens at its touch: Virtue ceases to exist: and even Religion holds out no charms to the victim of Despair.

From the alternate predominance of "bliss" and of "sorrows" we however derive that fitness for enjoyment which forms the sum of our happiness. The bitter cups of life contain much less nausea to those whom adversity has fed, and they sip them with diminished reluctance as they become accustomed to the gall. But when the sweeter draught of pleasure succeeds, how doubly delicious is the morsel! No alloy now mingles with the meed of delight, and we drink with increased avidity: as he who scarcely escapes with his life from the terrors of a precipice, feels more strongly sensible of the pleasures of existence. We all deplore the absence of the Sun's rays, when hidden from us by clouds and tempests, but when do they shine so lovely as after the thunders of Heaven have spent themselves, and they return to illumine Nature reviving at their approach?

Since it is fixed that all shall be subjected at some interval of life, to the predominance of Misery, let those who feel its cold grasp, diminish its baneful effects by reflecting, that moments of prosperity may shortly recompense them for hours of suffering, and that clouds do not always obstruct the influence of the cheering rays of joy. Should, however, those favourites of fortune who are permitted to sail on the stream of success, uninterrupted by adverse elements, be elated too greatly by propitious appearances, let them be sufficiently wise to curb such sanguine expectations; to prepare themselves for enduring misfortune; and to reflect that a reverse of circumstances may shortly evince the fallacy of judging the future by the present: That they are as much exposed to rocks and sands as those who are now the sport of opposition: And that the event only will show which attains and which misses the haven

"Where virtue triumphs and her sons are blest."

Q.

For the Evening Fire-side.

POEMS OF CATHARINE L——.

NO. VIII.

TO MEMORY.

O Memory! dear, though painful guest,
Resume thy empire o'er my breast,
Resume the sweetly plaintive strain,
And let my soul its former griefs sustain.
Gently unfold the hoard of tender woe,
And let the mellow'd tear of recollection flow;
When the world spreads its gay allurements round,
And my weak heart still vibrates to the sound;
When airy views allure my weaken'd sight,
And fond credulity still dreams delight,
When pleasure smiles, and gilds the fleeting charms
With varied dyes, and woos me to her arms—
O then, thou rugged monitor, attend,
And struggling virtue's sacred cause defend:
Bring to my view those disappointed hopes;
That op'ning dawn of bliss so early lost;
Those thoughts suggested by affliction's lore;
Those buds of wisdom which misfortune bore.
Say first what prospects opening to my view,
By hope conducted, fancy's pencil drew,
While blest beneath a father's tender wing,
I knew no anguish, and I felt no sting.
On fancy's wing my airy visions flew,
Nor thought them faithless till they all withdrew:
Nor heard the storm that threw its gloom around,
Nor spied the dart that gave the deadly wound.
Her keenest arrow sorrow gaily drest,
And grimly smiling, plung'd it in my breast:

That breast which then exulting in the pride
Of youthful prospects, ev'ry care defied.
O! Halcyon days; that never can return;
Too pure to last, and ah, too short to mourn!
Oh! may that day in darkest hue appear,
Which first call'd forth the bitter filial tear;
When sickness first its baneful influence shed,
And bent with anguish a lov'd parent's head;
When art and medicine were tried in vain,
To soothe his sufferings and relieve his pain.
Memory recalls the anxious doubts and fears,
Deceitful hopes, and all the pangs of years.
O canst thou paint the anguish of my soul,
Compell'd its bitterest feelings to controul;
Beneath a smile to veil the anxious smart,
While the deep wound corroded in my heart;
Whilst every thought was ting'd with pallid care,
And ev'ry trembling nerve vibrated to despair.
Hard is the task—the lesson most severe,
When anguish racks, a look serene to wear.
Well might my heart, prophetic, dread the blow
Which level'd all its earthly prospects low.
O thou lov'd object of our fervent prayer!
O most rever'd on earth, most priz'd, and dear!
Beneath whose shelt'ring arm no storm distrest,
Whose precepts guided, and whose fondness blest!
How shall my heart, whilst busy Memory strays
O'er all thy virtues, utter half thy praise!
Since every view my fatal loss proclaims,
And selfish sorrow all my soul o'erwhelms.
Now may thy mourners pour th' unheeded tear,
For cold's the heart that warmly felt our care.
Forever fled the hand that brought relief,
And stay'd that breath that sooth'd the voice of grief.
O Memory, whither wouldst thou lead my view!
To that sad hour when every hope withdrew:
When on my knees his lifeless hand I prest,
And bore it frantic to my bleeding breast.
O my lov'd father! ever on that breast
May the last look you gave me be imprest:
That look so fond, compassionate, benign,
As though my future sorrows you had seen.
Yet, Memory, tell how Hope's deluding charm
My sanguine bosom yet again could warm:
Thou yet canst whisper how my William smil'd,
And how his charms my every woe beguil'd;
When on his lovely opening bloom I dwelt,
Reveal the raptures which my bosom felt.
O! he was all my fondest wish could form,
Bright as the day and fragrant as the morn:
His sparkling eyes the fairest dawn portray'd,
Whilst o'er his features mild expression play'd.
Deceitful hopes! for O! that fragrant bloom
But shone to wither, and to grace the tomb.
I've seen those eyes that sparkled with delight;
I've wept them clos'd in everlasting night.
I've gaz'd with rapture on that cherub form,
Which every grace was eager to adorn,
And seen it laid forever in the tomb.
Return, ye sorrowing hours, ordain'd to bring
Such deep felt anguish on your fleeting wing.
Return, for O! the mournful visions charm
As the lov'd relics of my child I mourn.
Say how my angel sought my arms for rest,
And whilst I clasp'd him to my burning breast,
Secure he lay, and smil'd to see the tear,
By anguish wrung, and complicated care.
When sickness laid her hand upon my head,
And thro' my frame the subtle venom spread,
No more my arms a fond assylum prove,
My cares all fruitless, impotent my love.
Relentless death, that long had hover'd o'er,
Now seiz'd the lovely victim of his power.
O Memory hence! and let reflection bear
My soul from these to prospects far more dear.
When this vain scene is o'er, and I shall fly
To parent, child, and every tender tie.
But Oh! may all my wishes soar above
The narrow precincts of a mortal's love!
May God alone my every wish inspire,
And kindle in my soul devotion's fire:
At last be worthy in his sight to prove
How vain is all that mortals fondly love.

For the Evening Fire-side.

Borne on the wing of ever lapsing time,
Frequent I muse on death's mysterious sleep,
Or in hope's vision view that wondrous clime,
Where sorrow's children soon shall cease to weep.

Now e'er my heart the cup of anguish knows,
May I the evening sacrifice prepare,
Now while the spring of life's strong current flows,
To know the great Redeemer be my pray'r.

Quicken'd by thee, unsullied source of light,
A new creation in my heart shall spring,
An intellectual day succeed the night,
And I the song of triumph learn to sing.

In perfect love thy own creation save,
And let the Bethlehem star illume my way,
Dispel the gloom that hovers o'er the grave,
And gild the awful evening of my day.

PHILOTHEUS

Selected for the Evening Fire-side.

ANECDOTE.

The following whimsical anecdote is related of Doctor Young, author of "Night Thoughts:—

This eminent writer and amiable man was remarkable for the urbanity of his manners and the cheerfulness of his temper, prior to a most remarkable family contingency, which threw a shade over the subsequent part of his life. He was once on a party of pleasure to Vauxhall, and he amused them with a tune on the German flute. Two officers were also in a boat, rowing for the same place, and soon came along side the boat where the Doctor and the ladies were.

The Doctor, who was not very conceited of his playing, put up his flute upon their approach. One of them instantly asked why he ceased playing, or put the flute in his pocket. "For the same reason," said he, "that I took it out; to please myself." The son of Mars very peremptorily rejoined, that if he did not immediately take it out and continue his music, he would instantly throw him into the Thames. The Doctor, in order to allay the fears of the ladies, pocketed the insult with the best grace he could, and continued his tune all the way up the river. During the evening, however, he observed the officer who acted thus cavalierly, by himself in one of the walks, and making up to him, said with great coolness, "It was, sir, to avoid interrupting the harmony either of my company or yours, that I complied with your arrogant demand: But that you may be satisfied that courage may be found under a black as well as a red coat, I expect you will meet me to-morrow morning at a certain place, without any second, the quarrel being entirely *entre nous*. The Doctor further covenanted in a very peremptory manner that the business should be altogether settled with swords. To all those conditions the officer implicitly consented.

The duelists met the next morning at the hour and place appointed, but the moment the officer took his ground, the Doctor presented a large horse pistol to his head. "What," said the officer, "do you intend to assassinate me?" "No," said the Doctor, "but you shall this instant put up your sword and dance a minuet, otherwise you are a dead man." Some short altercation ensued, but the Doctor appeared so serious and determined, the officer could not help complying. "Now, Sir," said the Doctor, "you forced me to play yesterday against my will, and I have obliged you to dance against yours: we are again on an equal footing, and whatever other satisfaction you desire, I am ready.

The officer forthwith embraced the Doctor, acknowledged his impertinence, and begged that they might for the future live on terms of the sincerest friendship, which they did ever after.

DESSERT.

For the Evening Fire-side.

THE PLEASURES OF SOLITUDE.

Adieu to pomp, parade, and gay attire,
To sounding titles which the great admire:
I leave these paths where vice triumphant reigns,
And wanton folly every pleasure stains.
Pleas'd, I resign these fair delusive scenes;
To lonely solitude my fancy leans,
Where contemplation soars on seraph's wings,
And to the mind sublimest comfort brings.
'Tis here philosophy exerts her power,
To soothe and calm in deep affliction's hour,
To raise that noble part, the drooping soul,
Above the reach of passion's rude controul:
'Tis here alone, exalted and refin'd,
We feel the pleasures of a christian mind;

And here, O solitude, without alloy,
We taste the earnest of our future joy.
With peace serene, and holy quiet blest,
A lively emblem of eternal rest,
In stormy seasons hither let me fly,
Far from the reach of envy's partial eye:
Let soft compassion in my bosom reign,
With love to God and charity to men:
To deeds of worth my full attention bend,
To guard the orphan, be the widow's friend;
To aid the poor, to succor the distress'd,
And lead the weary traveller to rest.
I'd check the high, who vainly do assume,
But raise the low from melancholy's gloom.
A helping hand would reach unto the blind,
Social to strangers, to my neighbors kind;
The sick I'd visit with a parent's care,
And glad relieve with what my wants could spare.
Thus every friendly, social duty pay,
Till feeble nature weakens to decay:
And as I pass through age's dreary vale,
May no rude blasts my tottering barque assail.
But heavenly aid my latest hours support,
In safety lead me to my destin'd port.
And when that awful, solemn time is come,
That I am summon'd to my final home,
To take my leave of all terrestrial things,
And mount my soul upon seraphic wings,
May faith, and hope, and boundless love engage,
And future prospects present pains assuage:
May holy raptures in my bosom glow,
Elijah like to leave this world below,
Who, highly mounting on his flaming car,
Flew like a meteor blazing through the air.
So may my soul, wrapt in cherubic love,
Fly to those happy, blissful seats above:
There join forever the immortal train,
And great Jehovah's mighty power proclaim.

EDGAR.

SELECTED FOR THE EVENING FIRE-SIDE.

Some mute inglorious MILTON here may rest.
GRAY.

Reflections on genius unnoticed and unknown;—Anecdote of Michael Bruce.

Nothing has a greater tendency to elevate and affect the heart than the reflection upon those personages who have performed a distinguished part on the theatre of life, whose actions were attended with important consequences to the world around them, or whose writings have animated or instructed mankind. The thought that they are now no more, that their ashes are mingled with those of the meanest and most worthless, affords a subject of contemplation, which, however melancholy, the mind, in a moment of pensiveness, may feel a secret sort of delight to indulge. "Tell her," says *Hamlet*, "that she may paint an inch thick; yet to this she must come at last."

When *Xerxes*, at the head of his numerous army, and all his troops ranged in order before him, he burst into tears at the thought, that, in a short time, they would be sweeped from the face of the earth, and be removed to give place to those who would fill other armies, and rank under other generals.

Something of what *Xerxes* felt, from the consideration that those who then were, should cease to be, it is equally natural to feel from the reflection, that all who have formerly lived have ceased to live, and that nothing more remains than the memory of a very few who have left some memorial which keeps alive their names, and the fame with which those names are accompanied.

But serious as this reflection may be, it is not so deep as the thought, that even of those persons who were possessed of talents for distinguishing themselves in the world, for having their memories handed down from age to age, much the greater part it is likely, from hard necessity, or by some of the various fatal accidents of life, have been excluded from the possibility of exerting themselves, or of being useful either to those who lived in the same age, or to posterity. Poverty in many, and "disastrous chance" in others, have "chill'd "the genial current of the soul," and numbers have been cut off by premature death in the midst of project and ambition. How many have there been in the ages that are past, how many may exist at this very moment, who, with all the talents fitted to shine in the world, to guide or to instruct it, may, by some secret misfortune, have had their minds depressed, or the fire of their genius extinguished!

I have been led into these reflections from the perusal of a small volume of poems which happens now to lie before me, which, though possessed of very considerable merit, and composed in this country, are, I believe, very little known. In a well-written preface the reader is told, That most of them are the production of *Michael Bruce*: That this *Michael Bruce* was born in a remote village in *Kinross-shire*, and descended from parents remarkable for nothing but the innocence and simplicity of their lives: That in the twenty-first year of his age he was seized with a consumption, which put an end to his life.

Nothing, methinks, has more the power of awakening benevolence, than the consideration of genius thus depressed by situation, suffered to pine in obscurity, and sometimes, as in the case of this unfortunate young man, to perish, it may be, for want of those comforts and conveniences which might have fostered a delicacy of frame or of mind, ill calculated to bear the hardships which poverty lays on both. For my own part, I never pass the place (a little hamlet skirted with a circle of old ash trees, about three miles on this side of *Kinross*) where *Michael Bruce* resided: I never look on his dwelling,—a small thatched house, distinguished from the cottages of the other inhabitants only by a *sashed window* at the end, instead of a *lattice*, fringed with a *honeysuckle* plant, which the poor youth had trained around it;—I never find myself in that spot, but I stop my horse involuntarily; and looking on the window, which the honeysuckle has now almost covered, in the dream of a moment, I picture out a figure for the gentle tenant of the mansion; I wish, and my heart swells while I do so, that he were alive, and that I were a great man to have the luxury of visiting him there, and bidding him be happy. I cannot carry my readers thither; but, that they may share some of my feelings, I will present them with an extract from the last poem in the little volume before me, which, from its subject, and the manner in which it is written, cannot fail of touching the heart of every one who reads it.

A young man of genius, in a deep consumption, at the age of twenty-one, feeling himself every moment going faster to decline, is an object sufficiently interesting; but how much must every feeling on the occasion be heightened, when we know that this person possessed so much dignity and composure of mind, as not only to contemplate his approaching fate, but even to write a poem on the subject!

In the *French* language there is the much admired poem of the *Abbe de Chaulieu*, written in expectation of his own death, to the *Marquis de la Farre*, lamenting his approaching separation from his friend. *Michael Bruce*, who, it is probable, never heard of the *Abbe de Chaulieu*, has also written a poem on his own approaching death; with the latter part of which I shall conclude this paper.

Now spring returns; but not to me returns
The vernal joy my better years have known:
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
And all the joys of life with health are flown.

Starting and shiv'ring in th' unconstant wind,
Meagre and pale, the ghost of what I was,
Beneath some blasted tree I lie reclin'd,
And count the silent moments as they pass:

The winged moments, whose unstaying speed
Nor art can stop, or in their course arrest;
Whose flight shall shortly count me with the dead,
And lay me down in peace with them that rest.

Oft morning dreams presage approaching fate;
And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true.
Led by pale ghosts, I enter death's dark gate,
And bid the realms of light and life adieu!

I hear the helpless wail, the shriek of woe;
I see the muddy wave, the dreary shore,
The sluggish streams that slowly creep below,
Which mortals visit, and return no more.

Farewell, ye blooming fields! ye cheerful plains!
Enough, for me the church-yard's lonely mound,
Where Melancholy with still Silence reigns,
And the rank grass waves o'er the cheerless ground.

There let me wander at the close of eve,
When sleep sits dewy on the labourer's eyes,
The world and all its busy follies leave,
And talk with wisdom where my DAPHNIS lies.

There let me sleep, forgotten, in the clay,
When Death shall shut these weary aching eyes
Rest in the hopes of an eternal day,
Till the long night is gone, and the last morn arise.

P.

From the Boston Magazine.

The following lines were occasioned by observing in a late publication an account of the insanity of ANN RADCLIFFE, author of the 'Italian,' 'Mysteries of Udolfho,' 'Romance of the Forest,' &c. &c.

THE WRECK OF REASON.

Would your imagination stray:
To scenes of horror make its way;
Would it from folly take its flight,
From scenes of pleasure, to affright;
Would it, reluctant, slowly creep,
And o'er the *Wreck of Reason* weep;
—Hither come, ye blithe and gay:
Come, and throw your mirth away.
Weeping beauty, hither hie,
And o'er the ruin breathe a sigh:
Come an see, ye giddy vain,
A sadder sight than "*Crazy Jane*."

The tender heart, the lib'ral mind;
The soul by sentiment refin'd,
The modest mein, the graceful air,
Are gone, and all is ruin there.
The matchless whole, divinely grac'd,
Is chang'd into chaotic waste:—
The timid mind, with terror sated,
Starts at the phantoms it created.
—See the *Maniac*'s ghastly stare!
See her loose, dishevell'd hair!
See her wildly rolling eyes,
Distorted form, and piercing cries!
See she trembles, writhes and groans,
And fills the air with piteous moans!
—O Radtcliffe! this at last thy fate,
To sink to such a dreadful state!—
See she shudders, starts, and raves
Of grinning ghosts and gaping graves,
Of antique arms, and haunted halls,
Of tott'ring turrets, mouldering walls.
The fulgent cross, the monkish cowl,
The raven's flap, the boding owl,
The warning knell, the mystic roll,
With horror strike her frenzied soul.
The murky vault's terrific gloom,
The echoes from the dismal tomb,
The quivering pall, the crimson'd knife,
All gory with the blood of life,
The secret cell, the glimmering light,
The putrid corse, the flitting spright,
With pendant chain, the magic chest,
With terror fill her frantic breast.

No more she'll pen the fairy dream,
The awful, yet the pleasing theme;
No more pourtray with matchless art,
To frighten, yet delight the heart:
Genius in her has left the throne,
And madness now usurps alone.
Let frozen souls, precise and nice,
Call her the native child of vice;
Let torpid spirits, dry and stale,
Affect to startle and bewail,
A potent reason all may bring,
They in her MORAL find A STING—
E'en savage minds, to feeling dead,
And icy hearts, *by virtue led*,
When pitying death relieves her woe,
And lays the hapless victim low,
Might come and on the *Maniac*'s bier,
Shed pensive *Pity*'s softest tear.

T. P.

Surprising account of a deaf man.

Samuel Waterbury was born at Stamford, in Connecticut, August 29, 1762. He became entirely deaf in consequence of a violent strain 16 years ago. The first effect of the strain was blindness, which lasted about two hours, accompanied with nausea at the stomach, and bleeding at the ears and mouth. These were followed with a fit of illness of four weeks, during which he had not the regular use of his senses. Recovering from that he found he had entirely lost his hearing.

He soon became anxious to remedy the disadvantages of his situation, by first learning with some of his friends an alphabet by touching and bending the fingers, and thus spelling words. By this expedient he was able to hold a kind of telegraphic conversation with his friends. But his ingenuity suggested the possibility of ascertaining the pronunciation of words by the motion of the lips. To practise himself in this he took a mirror, and used to speak before it. He accurately observed the movement requisite to every sound; learning first syllables and then words. Uncertain of his success, he did not explain to his family either his intention or his progress, till after about six months diligent study he commenced the practice, in which he has been constantly improving. And now a person who was not informed of his particular situation, would hardly suspect that he was deaf at all; but might speak to him and receive regular answers, though he hears not a single word. He cannot even hear thunder, nor the report of a cannon. Such explosions, however, jar his nerves, and produce violent head-ache; sometimes followed by bleeding again at the mouth.

What is most singular is, that a person may whisper in the softest manner by pressing their lips against his cheek, and he understands perfectly well what is said: and he comprehends a whisper, either directed to him or between two persons at a distant part of the room.

This account was drawn up from a conversation with him by the Rev. T. M. Harris, of Dorchester, Massachusetts, in the presence of Major William Lee, some of his neighbors, and the boarders at the hotel, near Congress Spring, Saratoga, Sept. 20, 1805; near which Mr. Waterbury now resides.

A thought on rural contentment.

How happy is the rural swain,
Within his humble cot;
Unknown to flattery and disdain,
Contented with his lot.

Hark how he whistles o'er the plain,
To hail the new-born day;
No care can e'er disturb his brain,
Or interrupt his lay.

Nor tyrant customs, taught in schools,
Pure nature forms his plan;
Virtue alone prescribes his rules,
And happy makes the man.

Ye virtuosi of the age,
Ye learned of our schools,
Did e'er your scientific page
Direct more solid rules?

Account of the self immolation of the two widows of Ameer Jung, late Regent of Tanjore.

The Regent died on the 19th of April 1802, about ten o'clock, A. M. The moment he expired, two of his wives adorned themselves with their jewels and rich clothes, entered the apartment in which the body was laid, and, after three prostrations sat down by it, and announced to the whole court, which had assembled around it, their determination to devote themselves to the flames.

The youngest of the women was a regular wife, and about twenty years of age, and without children; the other was a wife of inferior rank, aged twenty-two, having one child, a daughter four years old. The fathers and brothers of both were present in the assembly; they made use of the most pressing and affecting

treaties to avert them from their purpoſe, but without ſucceſs.

The Britiſh reſident at Tanjore, having been appriſed of the intention of theſe ladies, and not being able to be perſonally preſent at the reſidence of the late Regent, had ſent his hircarrah to the ſpot, with orders to uſe every poſſible effort, ſhort of abſolute force, to prevent the horrid ſacrifice. When the relations of the ladies found their entreaties of no avail to induce them to relinquiſh their purpoſe, the hircarrah was ſent for; but his threats of the diſpleaſure of government had but a temporary and feeble effect. The Mahratta chiefs obſerved, that the company had never interfered in their religious inſtitutions and ceremonies; that the ſacrifice in queſtion was by no means uncommon in Tanjore; that it was highly proper to uſe every art of perſuaſion and entreaty to induce the women to relinquiſh their reſolution; but, if they perſiſted in it, force ought not to be uſed to reſtrain them. The women laughed at the menaces of the hircarrah, when he told them that their fathers and brothers would be expoſed to the diſpleaſure of government. The younger widow obſerved, that it was not the cuſtom of the Engliſh government to puniſh one perſon for the act of another; and pointing to her father, who had actually thrown himſelf at her feet in an agony of grief, asked the hircarrah if he thought any other inducement could alter her reſolution, when the affiiction of a father failed to move it. The young brother of the other went into the women's apartments, and returned with his ſiſter's child in his arms, which he laid at her feet, but ſuch was the reſolution of theſe aſtoniſhing women, that not a ſingle expreſſion of regret, nor a ſigh or tear could be drawn from them. Any one of the weakneſſes would have diſqualified them from burning with the body; and the efforts of the relations were ſtrenuous and conſtantly directed to excite them, but in vain. In anſwer to an obſervation of the hircarrah, that if the late Regent had been aware of their intention he would have forbidden it, they ſaid they had formed their reſolution a year before, and communicated it to him; who, after ſeveral ineffectual attempts to diſſuade them, had conſented to it.

The hircarrah, however, determined to protract the performance of the obſequies, as poſſible, until the arrival of the reſident. The women waited with patience until ſeven in the evening, taking no other refreſhment than a little betel occaſionally. They then ſent for the hircarrah, and told him that they ſuſpected the cauſe of the delay, and were reſolved, if the proceſſion did not immediately ſet out, to kill themſelves before him. Their relatives now gave up the point in deſpair. The other chiefs, who had taken no part hitherto, now interfered, and ſaid they had a right to be indulged, and ſhould not be reſtrained. The hircarrah retired, and the proceſſion ſet out. The younger and regular wife mounted the pile on which the body of the deceaſed Regent had been placed, and they were conſumed together. The fate of the other, who was not entitled to this diſtinction, was, in appearance, more dreadful. A pit eight feet deep, and ſix in diameter, had been dug a few yards diſtant from the pile; it was filled with combuſtible matter, and fire ſet to it. When the flames were at the fierceſt, fire was applied to the pile in which the young widow and the body of the Regent had been encloſed. The other, unſupported, walked thrice round the pit, and, after making obeiſance to the pile, threw herſelf into the midſt of the flames, and was no more heard or ſeen!

[*Philoſophical Magazine for* 1805.]

Remarkable Traits of Vanity, in Literary Characters.

Voiture was the ſon of a vintner, and like our Prior, was ſo mortified, whenever reminded of his original occupation, that it was ſaid of him, that wine, which cheered the heart of all men, ſickened that of Voiture. John Baptiſt Rouſſeau, the poet, was the ſon of a cobler; and when his honeſt parent waited at the door of the theatre, to embrace his ſon on the ſucceſs of his firſt piece, the inhuman poet repulſed his venerable father with inſult and contempt. Akenſide ever conſidered his lameneſs as an inſupportable misfortune, ſince it continually reminded him of his origin, having been occaſioned by the fall of a cleaver from one of his father's blocks, a reſpectable butcher. Milton delighted in contemplating his own perſon; and the engraver not having reached our ſublime bard's "ideal grace," he has pointed his indignation, in four iambics. Among the complaints of Pope, is that of "the pictur'd ſhape." Even the ſtrong minded Johnſon would not be painted "blinking Sam." Mr. Boſwell tells us, that Goldſmith attempted to ſhew his agility to be ſuperior to the dancing of an ape, whoſe praiſe had occaſioned him a fit of jealouſy, but he failed in imitating his rival.

D'ISRAELI.

ANECDOTE.

A child born and brought up on board a Britiſh ſhip of war, was noticed by an Admiral who came to review the ſhips crew. The Admiral aſked him ſeveral queſtions relative to ſea affairs, which the boy anſwered much to his ſatisfaction. Changing the ſubject, he aſked him, "Who is God?" The boy anſwered, "Indeed your honour, I don't know for *ſartin*, but I fancy he's the *firſt Lord of the Admiralty*."

"Heaven firſt taught Letters for ſome wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover or ſome captive maid:
They live, they ſpeak, they breathe what love inſpires,
Warm from the ſoul, and faithful to its fires;
The woman's wiſh, without her fears impart,
Excuſe the bluſh and pour out all her heart;
Speed the ſoft intercourſe from ſoul to ſoul,
And waft a ſigh from Indus to the Pole."

POPE.

LITERARY NOTICE.

A ſhort ſyſtem of Polite Learning, being an Epitome of the Arts and Sciences: for the uſe of ſchools. The firſt American edition improved by Daniel Jaudon, of Philadelphia. Publiſhed by J Johnſon, 18mo. 210 pages.

Although this little book owes its arrangement to a work of a ſimilar nature lately publiſhed in London; yet it is ſo improved by the introduction of ſubjects omitted in that, and by giving a more comprehenſive view of the different branches of ſcience there ſpoken of, as to almoſt merit the title of a new work.

We conſider it as a valuable preſent to the young ſtudent, not merely on account of the information it contains, although that is conſiderable; but the manner in which the ſubjects are treated, is ſuch as may tend to excite in the learner a deſire for a more particular acquaintance with the various departments of knowledge which are here juſt opened to his view.

When the memory only is addreſſed, the impreſſion is often of ſhort duration; and the information thus gained is apt to be left behind, by the pupil, who reſigns his ſeat in ſchool to engage in other purſuits of life: but when the teacher is ſo ſucceſsful as to awaken in the minds of his ſcholars a thirſt for knowledge, and a taſte for the cultivation of literature, the influence of education is more permanent, continuing to give luſtre to their declining days. Among the books calculated to aſſiſt in this important object, we think the "Short ſyſtem of Polite Learning" may be numbered. It embraces almoſt the whole circle of the ſciences, touching upon each in a ſummary manner.

If we were diſpoſed to find fault, we would ſay, that, in the diviſions which treat of hiſtory and government, too much ſpace is, perhaps, occupied in giving the royal ſucceſſion of England, and the particular functions of the chief officers and courts of that country; which it is not of *primary* importance an American ſhould know. But as this is a trifling error, it does not prevent us from recommending this little work as well worthy the attention of thoſe whoſe advancement in knowledge has not anticipated its contents.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—Capt. Vinall, of the ſchooner Waſhington, from Liverpool, (arrived at Boſton) who ſailed from thence the 25th Dec. informs, that various reports, reſpecting the military occurrences on the continent, were in circulation a few days previous to his ſailing; but the laſt was, that Bonaparte's Grand Army had been defeated. Capt. V. brought from Liverpool, London papers to the 22d of Dec. but gave them to the captain of a French man of war.

A letter from a gentleman of the firſt reſpectability at Liſbon, to a merchant in Norfolk, dated the 21ſt of December, contains the following:

"We have no further news here than the continued triumph of the French arms in Germany—after entering Vienna they ſtill purſued the enemy, and the Emperors of Ruſſia and Germany have retired as far as Craeow, in Poland, in conſequence of a great battle loſt by the allies at Aſt, near Brunn, in Moravia."

—

[*From Jamaica Papers received at New-York.*]

Kingston, (Jam.) Jan. 25.—On Friday laſt week the German Jews aſſembled in their Synagogue, for the purpoſe of offering a tribute of gratitude to the Almighty for the late glorious victory achieved by the immortal Nelſon. The Ark was opened, and the ceremonies uſed on the moſt ſolemn occaſions were obſerved with great devotion. The ſervice was performed in Hebrew, by the Rev. Simon Magnus.

By a Portugueſe veſſel arrived at Barbadoes from Rio-de-la-Plata, information was received that Buenos Ayres had been taken by Sir Home Popham and Sir D. Baird, without any loſs on our part.

Buenos Ayres is ſituated in the ſouthern or Ethiopian ocean, long. 58, 31, W. and lat. 34, 35, S. It is ſeated on the Rio-de la-Plata, 50 miles from the ocean, though the river there is 21 miles in breadth. It is well fortified, and thither is brought a great part of the treaſures and merchandize of Peru and Chili, which are exported to, and forms the ſinues of the Court of Spain. It contains above 3000 houſes and 30,000 inhabitants, Spaniards and native Americans. It certainly is an acquiſition of great importance.

Under the regulations adopted for the two Cork fleets, each veſſel had her number painted in large white figures under her main chains; they were directed to proceed in three columns, agreeably to the numbers they bore, at the diſtance of two cables length from each other, and the ſpace of a mile and a half to be preſerved between the reſpective columns.

In conſequence of the intelligence brought by the Sea-Horſe, the Veteran and Malebar men of war have been anchored at the entrance of Port Royal harbour.

The Britiſh Navy.—The total number of ſhips of war now in commiſſion amounts to 735. Of theſe 129 are of the line; 19 are from 50 to 44 guns; frigates 150; ſloops and leſſer veſſels 437. There are in port and fitting 134; in the England and Iriſh Channels 135; in the Downs and North Sea 164; in the Weſt-Indies 45; Jamaica ſtation 33; at Gibraltar, and on the Cadiz and Mediterranean ſtation 42 ſail of the line, and a great number of frigates. There are 18 ſail of the line preparing for ſervice, 31 building, 22 in ordinary, and 6 employed as receiving ships.

Novelties.—At Pouilly, on the Loire, ſome very curious Roman Antiquities have been found. A pavement about 50 feet under ground has been diſcovered, which is plainly a relict of the little town which formerly ſtood upon this ſpot, and which is mentioned by ſeveral antiquaries. Some Roman coins, with the effigy of Marcus Antonius, have been found.—Theſe are the only coins of that emperor which are known to exiſt.

We have it from a gentleman juſt arrived from Havanna, that an order was iſſued there, juſt before he left the place, prohibiting the exportation of Sugars.

[*Norfolk Herald.*

—

A letter from Waſhington, dated Feb. 25, ſays that the Bill prohibiting intercourſe with St Domingo, having paſſed the Senate by a large majority, was ſent to the lower Houſe, where it was attempted to carry it immediately—It adds, that there is no doubt but that it will ultimately be a law.

We learn from Waſhington that two reſolutions have paſſed the Senate of the United States. The firſt declaratory of our neutral rights. The ſecond adviſing the appointment of two Envoys to the Court of St. James, to adjuſt the exiſting differences between the United States and Great-Britain.

[*Gaz. U. S.*

About 1 o'clock on Tueſday afternoon, a fire broke out in a cluſter of wooden buildings in Nicholas ſtreet, New-York, back of the Bull's head, and deſtroyed the building in which it originated and two or three others.

Raleigh, (N. C.) Feb. 17.—We are ſorry to ſtate that we have juſt heard that a dreadful fire took place in Wilmington on Monday night laſt, by which two whole ſquares, compriſing nearly one half the town, were burnt to the ground. We underſtand that the fire commenced in a bake-houſe; the printing-office was not burnt, but the confuſion and diſtreſs was ſo great that no paper was iſſued as uſual, conſequently we have heard no particulars.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

With pleaſure we welcome ARIEL to his native ſhore, and regret that he has arrived too late for an introduction to our Fire ſide circles this week.

From the ſtyle and tenor of D's incoherent lines, we are led to ſuppoſe they were written during the *boiſterous turbulence of a midnight ſtorm*, rather than "all in the ſilence of a moonlight night." They are deemed unworthy of inſertion.

ERATO's eſſay, though proceeding from "the top of Mount Helicon," is rendered inadmiſſible by ſeveral deviations from delicacy of language.

NOTE.—Owing to the indiſpoſition of one of the Compoſitors, the publication of our paper has been *unavoidably* delayed.

ERRATA.

From the obſcure hand in which C's Elegy in our laſt number was written, the following Errata occurred: Firſt ſtanza, firſt line for

"I had a friend—ah! muſe, I ſay I had,"

read

I had a friend—ah! muſt I ſay I had?

Eighth ſtanza, firſt line, for *breaks* read *break*.

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